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ON CHINESE PORCELAINS.

According to legendary records porcelain was already manufactured in China under Huang-ti, who commenced his reign in B.C. 2697. This is, however, believed to have been only earthenware, possibly glazed. Real porcelain was not manufactured until the reign of the Han dynasty which held the throne of China from B.C. 202 to A.D. 220. It reached a notable degree of excellence under the T'ang dynasty, which ruled from 618 to 906, when porcelain received its popular name of *Yao*.

The earliest porcelain extant dates from the Sung dynasty, 960-1259. It is invariably in monochrome, the painting of decoration, such as flowers, arabesques, scroll work and landscapes, under the glaze, not being introduced until the early part of the Ming dynasty—that is the first half of the fifteenth century.

After an interval of retrogression under the Yuan dynasty, 1260-1349, we find the art making great progress under the Ming dynasty, 1368-1649. Special attention to decoration in blue under the glaze was given to work done in the first half of the fifteenth century, which work has a brilliancy of color never afterwards quite equaled. At the same time a brilliant red color was introduced, while in the later half of the century the introduction of enamel colors took place.

Under the present dynasty the art was again revived about 1700. In the later productions of the Ming dynasty green was the predominating color employed in decoration, such porcelain being hence termed *la famille verte*. Later, green gave way to red as the predominating color, giving a style of decoration called *la famille rose*.

In 1727 Nien Hsi-Yao became the maker of the famous Nien porcelain, graceful in form and of fine workmanship. It is chiefly monochrome in color, blue, bright and carmine reds, celadons, and "of egg color as bright as silver." Some pieces were ornamented with painted flowers, either incised or plain. The dull white-pink shade upon an underground of pale sea-green is called "peach-blow"; in some specimens this underground forces itself into notice in the form of splotches on the pink. Black grounds were also introduced at this time, as was *sang-de-boeuf*. Articles of small dimensions, such as snuff-bottles, winecups, vessels for washing pencils, etc., were also made of an opaque-white vitreous ware, decorated with a brilliancy of color which makes the work of this period the most highly prized.

In all the centuries in which this art has been practiced in China, there are some half-dozen periods in which the art flourished preëminently, and whose products may be considered to excel. These periods are:

Ching-hwa era, A.D. 1465-1488.

Wan-li era, A.D. 1537-1620.

Kang-he era, A.D. 1661-1722.

Yung-ching era, A.D. 1723-1736.

Kien-lung era, A.D. 1736-1795.

Taou-kwang era, A.D. 1821-1851.

The best collections of Chinese porcelains in this country are the Garland collection, in the Metropolitan Museum; the William T. Walters collection, of Baltimore, Md., and collections gathered by Samuel P. Avery, Sr., Samuel Colman, Silas Evans, E. C. Moore, Geo. B. Warren, Benjamin Altman, W. L. Andrews, Robert Hoe, Chas. A. Dana, S. L. M. Barlow, Heber R. Bishop, H. O. Havemeyer, William Man, William M. Laffan, James A. Garland, Brayton Ives, J. Pierpont Morgan, S. N. Nickerson, Thos. B. Clarke, John L. Cadwalader, S. T. Peters, Henry Sampson, George A. Hearn, Charles H. Tweed, Samuel Thorne, Howard Manfield, Cyrus J. Lawrence, I. D. Fletcher, Mrs. A. A. Anderson, W. A. Clark and James W. Ellsworth. All these are in New York. Outside of New York I can mention the col-

lections of Henry Graves, Orange, N. J.; Deming Jarves, Detroit; Charles L. Freer, Detroit; Marsden J. Perry, Providence; Mrs. David P. Kimball, G. G. Hammond, Jr., and Dr. Sturgis Bigelow, of Boston; Mrs. Potter Palmer, Mrs. Nickerson, Mrs. W. W. Kimball and M. B. Ryerson, of Chicago; A. B. Widener, of Philadelphia; Lewis H. Blair, of Richmond; Sir W. C. Van Horne, R. B. Angus, James Ross, and E. B. Greenshields, in Montreal.



IN THE GEO. B. WARREN COLLECTION.

THE GEORGE B. WARREN COLLECTION OF ANTIQUE CHINESE PORCELAINS.

Art is not confined to geographical limits. In every city in this country some men are found whose devotion to art is supreme. In Troy, N. Y., one passes an unpretentious brick house on Second street, never dreaming that it contains one of the finest collections of rare antique Chinese porcelains in this country. Mr. George B. Warren, who has gathered this extraordinary collection over a course of many years, loves flowers. A unique garden contains an array which is probably unparalleled in American horticulture. Hundreds of native orchids and thousands of trilliums flourish there, converting this spot in the midst of brick and stone into a charming miniature wild-wood.

Mr. Warren's refined taste and artistic instincts and love for beauty is also exemplified in his incomparable collection of the highest grades of porcelain in miniature and cabinet sizes, which stamps him as a cultivated amateur.

In an unostentatious manner he began to collect porcelain many years ago, and in the beginning he found in his life-long friend, the late George H. Boughton, a sympathetic and competent adviser. The collection is unique because it is constituted almost entirely of small ware. There was method in this selection. Artists bestow on small pieces generally more care; these are done more *con amore*, and this collector exacted such fineness of glaze and such exquisite delicacy of form as can only be found in miniature pieces. One marvels at the beautiful colors, decorations, and forms which are displayed in the cabinets and arrayed on shelves and stands throughout the house.

To give a description which will do justice to a collection like this one is utterly impossible, and I will only cull from the catalogue, which Mr. Warren himself prepared, such items as may